



TEA-21 Reauthorization Will Determine Federal Transit Funding

Much of the attention regarding reauthorization of TEA-21 has focused on federal funding for highways. The distribution of transit and public transportation funding, however, also will be determined in the forthcoming legislation.

Currently, approximately \$7 billion per year in federal funding is allocated for transit needs. A total of \$45 billion was directed toward transit over the course of TEA-21. The funding is derived at 80 percent from the Highway Trust Fund and 20 percent from the General Fund.

A budget amendment sponsored by Missouri Senator Kit Bond and adopted by the senate would put transit funding at \$56.5 billion over the six-year life of the TEA-21 reauthorization act. That amount averages out to about \$9.4 billion in transit spending per year. The house budget proposes transit funding at \$44 billion over six years through reauthorization.

A draft version of the Bush administration reauthorization plan would set funding for transit at approximately \$7.2 billion in FY 2004 and at about \$8 billion by FY 2009. The plan has not been released by the United States Department of Transportation and is subject to change prior to its introduction.

The MoDOT “One Missouri” TEA-21 reauthorization document addresses vital issues for Missouri transit. Although most of Missouri’s transit users ride buses, 80 percent of federal transit capital funding is now spent on light rail and commuter rail systems. The One Missouri proposal calls for holding the line on transit bus capital funding with “no less than 20 percent to bus programs.”

Transit systems represent both a target and a resource on the homeland security front. Buses have been the target of choice for suicide bombers and attempts have been made to use biological and chemical agents on rail transit systems. The One Missouri proposal cites that, “new obligations for transportation planning and response to homeland security must be accompanied with new revenue sources.”

Lastly, the “One Missouri” proposal calls for increased federal investment for community and rural transit systems. MoDOT’s Long Range Transportation Direction identified unmet transit mobility needs. Increased federal funding would provide a down payment toward improving both rural and urban transit services in Missouri.

MoDOT Transit Administrator Steve Billings contributed to this article. For more information, please contact Transportation Planning Liaison Kent Van Landuyt at (573) 526-9778 or Public Information Manager Shane Peck at (573) 522-6996. MoDOT’s website also highlights TEA-21 reauthorization at modot.org.

Administration Releases AIR-21 Reauthorization Proposal

The United States Department of Transportation submitted the four-year Centennial of Flight Aviation Authority Act to Congress on March 25. Known as Flight-100 it is the Bush administration's proposal for funding of the Federal Aviation Administration over a four-year period.

"Flight-100 will help increase capacity and efficiency throughout our aviation system while improving the existing environmental review process," Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta said. "The Bush administration looks forward to working closely with the Congress on timely passage of this bill as we continue to improve the safest aviation system in the world."

The proposed legislation would provide \$2.9 billion in FY 2004 and \$3.1 billion by FY 2007 for FAA facilities and equipment. Much of this funding would be used to enhance aviation safety and security according to the DOT.

To improve efficiency, the FAA would get \$7.5 billion in FY 2004 for operations and maintenance -- a seven percent increase over the FY 2003 budget request. Meanwhile, the proposal also includes \$100 million for safety research, engineering and development in FY 2004.

The Airport Improvement Program would be allocated \$3.4 billion each year over the life span of the four-year act. This amount is the same as the current funding level. These funds would be used to address industry capacity and efficiency issues.

Total funding figures for Flight-100 were not released. For FY 2003, \$13.6 billion was appropriated to the FAA. The DOT budget request for FY 2004 proposed approximately \$14 billion for the aviation administration.

Flight-100 does not include increases to user fees or excise taxes on airlines, travelers or shippers.

Catching a Glimpse of the President's Plan for Reauthorization

Details about the Bush administration's preliminary TEA-21 reauthorization plan have been leaked recently. Referred to as the Safe and Flexible Transportation Efficiency Act of 2003, the proposal has not been released and is in its draft form.

The tentative plan would authorize \$247 billion for transportation from FY 2004 to FY 2009. TEA-21 contained approximately \$240 billion in federal funds.

SAFETEA, in its current form, would fall short of funding levels being discussed in Congress. The house is looking to dedicate \$250 billion to highway and transit needs while the senate budget resolution passed last week allows for \$310 billion.

The administration has not said when it will release a final version of its TEA-21 reauthorization proposal.

Another Poll Indicates Support for Transportation Improvements

A national telephone poll of 1,032 people commissioned by the American Automobile Association indicates that 71 percent of those surveyed said it is "very important" that their communities have good roads and public transit while 21 percent said it is "somewhat important."

The poll was conducted March 21 to March 24.

MoDOT Contacts

TEA-21 Reauthorization Staff

Kevin Keith Chief Engineer	(573) 751-3692
Jay Wunderlich Governmental Affairs	(573) 751-8273
Kent Van Landuyt Coordination	(573) 526-9778
Shane Peck Communications	(573) 522-6996